



ANOTHER GOOD YEAR

MANAGER'S MOMENT

By Kent Taylor
President & CEO
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So, I will come right out and say it: THANKS! The message from the employees and the board of directors to all the patrons of Farmers Ranchers Cooperative is that we appreciate you and thank you for your business this past year. Our fiscal year ended on Aug. 31, and in spite of some tough economic times in the agricultural sector, your cooperative experienced another very successful year.

Some highlights from the last fiscal year include:

- Total company sales: \$44.7 million
- Local net profit: \$1.7 million
- Total net profit*: \$2.2 million

**This number includes all the patronage we receive from large regional cooperatives like CHS and Land O'Lakes; it also includes the payments required for federal/state taxes.*

(Please visit any of our locations or www.frcoop.com for a copy of the annual report.)



Obviously, I am pleased to share this information with you. The last five years have been the cooperative's best in its history. We have been in an unprecedented era in American agriculture and your co-op has benefited from the good times. In fact, a year ago we were celebrating the company's best financial year ever.

We all know this past year has brought some challenges to the agricultural industry, and so it's probably no surprise that we did not reach the highs of that record year. But in terms of rankings, this past fiscal year would be the fourth-best of all time. I attribute our successful years to the loyalty of our customers, to our assets and our great employee base. The combination allows us to provide the services and products that you need to operate your home and business.

Every season will have challenges, and we understand that you, too, are finding your way through this down cycle. Just know that Farmers Ranchers is here long term to work for you, our patrons.

Young Producers Program - it's back!

We are excited to announce the third year of the Young Producers

Program—an afternoon and evening offering good food, interactions with peers and a chance to learn something new. We are thrilled to announce that Mike Pearson, host of the popular Market to Market television program, will be the presenter on Jan. 5. We invite you to read more about the event on page 4. It promises to be a great evening designed to serve the young ag producers of the area. I hope to see you there.

There's another important date to mark on your calendar. On Saturday, July 29, 2017, Farmers Ranchers Cooperative will celebrate its 100th anniversary. We are planning a day full of events, food and fun. Our featured

speaker will be Matt Davison. Matt was a member of the 1997 Nebraska football national championship team and currently serves as color commentator for the UNL football and basketball radio broadcasts. We plan to end the day with a free tractor pull featuring the loud monster tractors, not the ones you used to rake hay with!

Finally, I'll end in the spirit of the season. Thanks again for your business and the privilege of serving you. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. ■



TAKING ON A NEW CHALLENGE

After five years learning the feed business from the inside of the Ainsworth feed mill, Toby Fernau is now discovering the business from the back of the retail counter. Toby, who joined the feed mill staff in October 2011, was named manager of the Valentine Feed Store this past July. He's enjoying the transition and the interaction with Farmers Ranchers' customers.

"It's been a different experience," says Toby, "but a really good one. Each day I learn something new, and I enjoy talking with our customers and understanding more about their business." As someone who ran and maintained the feed stacker equipment at the mill, and helped load feed, he brings an inside understanding of how feed is handled before it ever reaches the customer. "I can answer just about any question about how the feed is produced," says Toby. He's also able to turn to Farmers Ranchers Nutritionist Dr. Jennifer Leupp and Feed Division Manager Rocky Sheehan as resources

for the more technical side of the feed business.

Toby is also very familiar with the Sandhills territory—and the people who live and work in the region. Living in Ainsworth during his early years, he and his family moved to Valentine, where he graduated from high school. He attended Chadron State University, graduating with a degree in criminal justice. And now he's interacting with ranchers every day, working to provide the products and services needed for the livestock businesses in the area.

An avid hunter—especially enjoying the pursuit of Nebraska's wild turkeys—Toby enjoys being in his home territory. He was even able to work beside his brother, Derek, another Farmers Ranchers feed mill employee, before starting his new job at the feed store. Now his focus is on his customers. "I want to make sure we have what our customers need," stresses Toby. "I really want to concentrate on service and striving to be our customers' number one choice for feed." ■



Toby Fernau is FRC's new Valentine Feed Store manager.

SOLUTIONS FOR CHALLENGING TIMES



By Justin Nelson, Agronomy Division Manager, jnelson@frcoop.com

If there was ever a time to take advantage of crop planning tools for the upcoming growing season,

this is it. With lower commodity prices and tighter margins, it's imperative you make the most out of every acre you farm. Farmers Ranchers Co-op has tools that can make a positive difference.

We invite you to come in and talk to us about our AgVance® software program. This technology allows us to provide you with an estimated cost per acre for next year, taking into consideration fertilizer, chemical and seed costs. We implemented the

software early last year, and we're ready to put the program to work as a service to our agronomy customers. We can inject the estimated costs and give you a good idea of where you'll stand. Give us a call and we can set up a time to go through your information and enter it into the system.

Other tools to make a positive difference for this coming year include variable-rate seeding. With your success depending on the choices you make, it's critical to match your acres with the right hybrids. Farmers Ranchers, partnering with WinField® United, does a very good job at placing seed. With WinField's R7® Tool technology, including its deep collection of data, we have the

resources to place the right hybrid on the right acre.

Get a head start with prepaids and fall fertilization

Depending on what side of the calendar you prefer, Farmers Ranchers Co-op will be taking prepaids on seed and fertilizer through December and January. We're also scheduling fall fertilization of meadows. Why put off making decisions that can help the bottom line on next year's balance sheet? Give us a call or stop in to see the many ways Farmers Ranchers Agronomy staff can help you best weather the agronomy challenge. ■

YOUR PLACE TO FILL UP—FOOD AND FUEL!

By Peggy Graham, Ampride Manager, pgraham@frcoop.com

When you think Ampride, I bet you automatically think about fueling your vehicle. It's true, you can count on your Farmers Ranchers Ampride® Convenience Store in Ainsworth when you need to fill your vehicles with quality fuels, but we offer so much more.

Throughout the holiday season, it's a great time to remind you that we can assist you with those extra goodies that can make your entertaining simpler. When company's coming, why not order ahead for items like cookies, cinnamon rolls, donuts or dinner rolls. Give us a couple days' notice. We'll have them ready when you need them.

Or stop in when you need a wake-me-up cup of coffee or a snack on the run. We've got options including tacos, hamburgers, cheeseburgers, chicken sandwiches, Bosco sticks, egg rolls and the ever-popular f[®]real[®] frozen treats including milkshakes, fruit smoothies and gourmet frozen cappuccinos.

To order food, call at least two days ahead at 402-387-0144. Also, a reminder that our hours are 4 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and, beginning in December and throughout the winter, 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Sundays. ■



Ampride Manager Peggy Graham and Assistant Manager Mary Lou Hughes and the rest of the Ampride staff are ready to make your holiday cooking a bit easier.

AVOID THE VEHICLE WINTER BLUES

Dennis McBride, Mr. Tire Manager, dmcbride1@frcoop.com



'Tis the season, folks, to be stocking up on fuel additives that can help you make it through the cold winter months without those inconvenient fuel

line freeze ups or gelling. Mr. Tire™ has a great selection of products—at competitive pricing—that will help keep the winter vehicle blues away.

Let's talk diesel

When it comes to diesel fuel supplements, we handle Power Service® and Howes® products. Power Service's Diesel Fuel Supplement +Cetane Boost® and Howes Diesel Treat Anti-Gel disperse the water in the fuel and help prevent gelling.

It's important to know that we believe in these products. Not only do I personally use them in my own diesel engines, but our fuel department uses them in their trucks and adds the supplements to customers' fuel tanks during the winter. We sell hundreds of cases each year. Right now we're running a special. Pay just \$10.50 a jug, or \$9.50 per jug if you buy a case of six. It's one of the best prices on these products you'll find in the area.

For those who don't begin adding the anti-gelling products early enough, and end up with a gelling incident, we've also got you covered. Power Service puts out a product called Diesel 911. In a winter emergency situation, 911 restores the flow of diesel fuel to an engine stalled by gelled fuel or frozen fuel filters.

Antifreeze in bulk and HEET

Mr. Tire is also your source for antifreeze. At \$8.75 per gallon—a price that's held for several years—you can bring in your own container, whether it's a 30-gallon drum or gallon jugs, and we'll get them filled and you're on your way.

For your gasoline engines, don't forget to have HEET® Gas-Line Antifreeze & Water Remover on hand. And, if you've used ethanol in your smaller gas engines that sit idle over the winter—things like lawnmowers and weed trimmers—we carry Ethanol Shield™ Fuel Stabilizer. It eliminates, then prevents ethanol-related problems in power equipment with two-cycle and four-cycle engines, removing water, preventing corrosion and helping keep stored fuel fresh.

Stop in now and stock up on these winter-friendly products. ■

INSIDE

VEHICLES WINTER READY?

PAGE 3



THIRD ANNUAL YOUNG PRODUCER EVENT

Mike Pearson, host of the popular Market to Market television program, will headline Farmers Ranchers Cooperative's third annual Young Producer Event on Jan. 5, 2017. Pearson, broadcaster and part-time grain and livestock farmer from central Iowa, says he's excited to be part of this important event for producers ages 40 and under. "The attendance numbers Farmers Ranchers Co-op has had for the past two Young Producer Events blows my mind," said Pearson during a phone interview. "To get 150 young producers at a meeting means you're doing something right."

Pearson, who will be leading both an afternoon workshop and an after-dinner presentation, will focus on the farm market outlook—and global trends impacting the markets. Farmers Ranchers CEO and President Kent Taylor says attendees at the previous events listed marketing as an interest area for a future event. While Pearson will discuss the ABC's of effective marketing during the afternoon session, including the tools, when and why you might use them and the risks, he says the evening presentation will be educational but lighter in tone. "We're going to have some fun," says the television personality. "I'm really positive about agriculture and I want people to get fired up about our industry."

He says he also wants to convey a sense of optimism, even during a down cycle in the industry. "My wife and I have a little cow herd," explains Pearson. "We've been expanding our feed facilities and growing the operation, and taking on some debt to do it because I believe



Market to Market's Mike Pearson will provide an educational and entertaining presentation at this year's Young Producers Event.

there is a lot of opportunity down the road." He says producers who can cut costs and find efficiencies during the current down cycle can be well positioned when things turn around.

That's why he says he hopes young producers in the Sandhills territory will take advantage of the Farmers Ranchers event and come and participate. "The networking at these events with other producers will pay off," says Pearson. "It allows you to build bonds that, especially in ranch country, can be difficult to do. We're connected with Facebook and Twitter and other social media, but those aren't the places that allow you to get to know somebody well enough to share challenges or ask for help. You have to meet them in person and that's the real strength in events like this." ■